Northwest Territories Aboriginal Languages Plan A Shared Responsibility

October 2010

Northwest Territories Education, Culture and Employment

A Message from the Honourable Jackson Lafferty
Minister Responsible for Official Languages

Aboriginal languages are the foundation of northern cultures. They define Aboriginal peoples, they describe northern values and beliefs and they provide the framework through which northern people express their views and visions.

The Northwest Territories' Official Aboriginal languages are being threatened. Use of the languages has decreased significantly over the past fifty years. The potential for loss of a number of our languages is very high and is likely to occur unless we work together to strengthen Aboriginal language use.

The *NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan* has been prepared based on the input of many people. Work on the Plan was initiated following the NWT Aboriginal Languages Symposium in March 2010. The Symposium was followed by a review of the extensive work done over the past decade to examine language issues. This Plan also used the information collected, the results and recommendations of the 2009 report of the NWT Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Government Operations titled *Reality Check: Securing a Future for the Official Languages of the Northwest Territories* as a foundational reference.

Based on all the input and information, it is clear – people know what needs to be done. This Plan recommends urgent action and reinforces the theme of shared responsibility, identified by language community experts who made up the Symposium Advisory Group. It shows how we must work together to focus our efforts on strengthening Aboriginal languages. We believe that it is only through comprehensive and collective action that we can revitalize our languages and that we must take action now.

The Honourable Jackson Lafferty
Minister Responsible for Official Languages

A Message from Kevin Menicoche
Chair of the Standing Committee on Government Operations

On May 28, 2009, the Standing Committee on Government Operations presented its *Final Report on the Review of the Official Languages Act 2008-2009: Reality Check: Securing a Future for the Official Languages of the Northwest Territories.* In its report, the Committee found that that the existing legislation does not do enough to protect Aboriginal languages, and that in order to preserve our languages for future generations, we need to make urgent comprehensive revitalization efforts. After travelling throughout the Territories and hearing from many communities, language speakers, and stakeholders, the Committee made 48 recommendations with the purpose of revitalizing our languages. For their diligence and efforts in that important work, I'd like to thank the Members of the Standing Committee on Government Operations: Deputy Chair and MLA Yellowknife Centre Robert Hawkins, MLA Great Slave Glen Abernethy, MLA Hay River South Jane Groenewegen, and MLA Sahtu Norman Yakeleya, as well as former Members MLA Nunakput Jackie Jacobson and MLA Mackenzie Delta David Krutko.

Following the presentation of the Committee's Report in the Legislative Assembly, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment held a very successful Aboriginal Languages Symposium entitled "Our Languages – A Shared Responsibility" to consult with Aboriginal language experts and to develop a plan to move forward with work on Aboriginal languages. The Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Minister Responsible for Official Languages, and I co-chaired the symposium. Northerners' contributions at the symposium, additional consultation, and thorough review led to the NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan. Committee Members were very pleased to see many of their recommendations appear in this plan. There is much more work to do, but the Committee is happy with the progress to date and wishes the Minister Responsible for Official Languages, as well as government, board and agency staff, every success in the implementation of this plan. We will follow, with interest, the progress of this plan as it moves forward to protect and revitalize our Aboriginal languages.

Kevin Menicoche
Chair, Standing Committee on Government Operations

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Northwest Territories Aboriginal Languages Plan* sets out a framework for strengthening Aboriginal languages over the next decade. It describes a broad vision, goals and objectives, as well as a series of strategies and actions to support increased use of Aboriginal languages by residents and the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT).

The use and revitalization of the languages is important to northerners. Aboriginal languages reflect distinctive histories and cultures of this land. To speak one's own language provides a sense of identity, self-esteem and supports social cohesion. The knowledge expressed through languages benefits not just the culture from which it comes, but also contributes to the sum total of all knowledge.

> "The people that are here today have fought for their language and traditions to be as strong and as powerful as other official languages throughout Canada."
>
> Hon. Jackson Lafferty
> Minister Responsible for Official Languages
> Government of the Northwest Territories

However, the NWT's nine Official Aboriginal Languages are under pressure. In the past fifty years the use of the north's Aboriginal languages has dropped significantly and, like many heritage languages around the world, face strong pressure from Canada's dominant languages – English and French. The NWT Bureau of Statistics *2009 NWT Community Survey* highlighted some uncomfortable information with respect to the number of those with the ability to converse in Aboriginal languages. Currently, there are about 7,200 people living in the NWT who can converse in an Aboriginal Language – but this represents only about 38 percent of Aboriginal residents.

Overall, five of the NWT's Official Aboriginal Languages have less than five hundred people with the ability to converse; six of the languages now have less than 1,000 people, eight languages have less than 1,500 and only one NWT official Aboriginal language community, Tlicho, has more than 2,500 people with the ability to converse. These figures reinforce the urgent need for action to revitalize Aboriginal languages.

The *NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan* was developed based upon the comments and contributions of over 300 northerners. Building upon the results of the NWT Aboriginal Languages Symposium held in the spring of 2010 and co-hosted by the Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Minister Responsible for Official Languages and Mr. Kevin Menicoche, Chair of the NWT Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Government Operations, the Plan was developed over the past six months. In preparing the Plan, past research and consultations were reviewed; interviews were conducted with language experts, leaders and others with an interest and involvement in language matters.

The Plan recognizes and supports the concept that responsibility for language is shared between individuals, families, language communities, governments and the broader society. It suggests that all must be responsible for doing their part to support Aboriginal language use. In particular, the Plan discusses the key roles that language communities must play in supporting the increased use of Aboriginal language and highlights the language plans identified by language community members at the NWT Aboriginal Languages Symposium.

The Plan provides a vision statement to guide work over the next decade. The vision describes a picture of what the situation would be if the goals of the Plan were achieved. The vision is simple and direct and reflects the ideas and suggestions heard from people living throughout the NWT:

> ***Aboriginal languages are used extensively, on a daily basis, to communicate in NWT homes and communities, as well as within the organizations and agencies providing services to the public.***

To achieve this result, the Plan focuses on four goals, each of which is supported by three objectives. The goals and objectives emphasize the importance of understanding and valuing languages, speaking languages in everyday situations and then writing languages. The final goal speaks directly to the aspect of government services and suggests that a particular emphasis on service should be placed in areas where the public believes there is the greatest need - health, social services, justice and housing.

***NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan* – Goals and Objectives**

Promote Aboriginal Language Use	Speak Aboriginal Languages	Write Aboriginal Languages	Provide Government Services in Aboriginal Languages
Increase public awareness and understanding of the importance of Aboriginal languages	Encourage family-centered, community, and educational activities supporting conversational use of Aboriginal languages	Develop standards for written language use	Set GNWT language service levels, focusing on those government services that are of high importance to the public
Recognize and celebrate Aboriginal language use	Increase opportunities for speaking Aboriginal languages in formal and informal settings	Enhance languages through agreement on terminology and language use	Provide active offer for services in Aboriginal languages
Demonstrate leadership in promoting and using Aboriginal languages	Encourage use of Aboriginal languages during cultural activities	Use writing to communicate stories, legends and other information	Require oral and written language services to meet established standards

The Plan's vision, goals and objectives are supported by five groups of activities called Supporting Strategies and Actions. Combined the Supporting Strategies and Actions include over seventy actions. A number of the actions support more than one of the goals. A general description and highlights of actions for each of the Supporting Strategies are outlined below.

Collaborate and Cooperate in Strengthening Aboriginal Languages

Successful strengthening of Aboriginal languages requires extensive cooperation between families, communities, organizations and governments. Each has a critical role to play in language revitalization and service efforts. Overall success requires the sharing of information, project results, accountability and best practices.

The actions in this area suggest that there is increased collaboration and definition of roles and responsibilities through agreements between the GNWT and Aboriginal governments. Agreements could outline the commitment of governments to work together, define the roles and areas of collaboration, identify funding to be used for program activities and outline how mutual accountability for actions will be addressed. This Supporting Strategy also includes actions to increase information exchange and the review and streamlining of the Aboriginal language community funding processes. Finally, it calls for collaborative and cooperative actions through which leadership, language specialists and northerners can work together to promote and celebrate Aboriginal language use.

Provide Aboriginal Language Education and Training

Fundamental to the transmission of language between one generation and the next is successful language learning. In the NWT, this means that youth and adults who do not currently speak an Aboriginal language must have formal and informal opportunities to learn – some of these opportunities will be in traditional, land-based settings, while others will occur in schools and other learning centres.

Actions in this Supporting Strategy are based on the concept of family and community literacy. This suggests that efforts to strengthen Aboriginal language use begins with the family – parents, grandparents and children and that programs and supporting activities must be structured to reflect the critical importance of the family. It also suggests that actions are required to support adults, particularly parents, who have lost their language skills, so that they may relearn their language with their children.

Enhance Organizational Support for Language Activities

Governments have key roles in supporting the strengthening of Aboriginal languages. Governments deliver support through departments and agencies. Ensuring that such departments and agencies are appropriately structured and have the mandates, staff and funding necessary to carry out their responsibilities is important.

Some of the key actions in the Plan include establishing an Aboriginal Languages Centre, operating at-arms-length from the GNWT and reporting to the Aboriginal Languages Revitalization Board, to lead and promote coordination, collaboration and various revitalization and language development activities. It also suggests the elimination of the Official Languages Board and the re-focusing of current policies and legislation on establishment of two regimes. The first, to emphasize Aboriginal language protection, revitalization and modernization and a second regime to address language service requirements within the GNWT.

Utilize Technologies to Support Goals
A wide-range of technologies is now available to improve the storage and transmission of information. These technologies can be extensively used to document, preserve, increase access to and support for Aboriginal language programs. These technologies do not replace the people who have the knowledge and skill resulting from years of language use, but rather provide ways in which this information and knowledge can be transmitted to others.

Specific actions to complete the standardization of the Dene font, preservation of existing language materials such as writings, audio and video tapes and investigating the use of current and future technologies to support language learning are identified as action areas.

Language Planning and Measuring Success
All aspects of the *NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan* must be monitored to determine whether the activities are successful. Monitoring can also help us understand what can be done to continually improve programs and services offered. The monitoring, evaluation and accountability for activities is a shared responsibility involving language communities, governments and the residents of the NWT.

Aboriginal language use in the NWT has reached a critical stage. Revitalization actions have a limited period in which to become effective before many of those with the best understanding of the languages, and the strongest language skills are no longer with us. As a result, it is particularly important that actions taken are focused effectively and, if they do not work, they are adjusted or terminated to make way for better programs. By taking actions to plan, monitor and evaluate actions, all involved are committing to finding the best possible activities.

The Plan goes on to discuss implementation of the actions and indicates that all of the actions noted are to begin within three years. It also indicates that a regular review of the Plan will be important, as adjustments to the Plan are likely to be required. The Plan describes a schedule for review that will occur every three years.

The future of the NWT's Official Aboriginal Languages is unclear. The erosion of language use, the aging population of language speakers and the pressures created by dominant languages all suggest that revitalizing Aboriginal languages will be a challenge. That being said, many northerners believe in the importance of languages to the cultures of the people living in the NWT. As well, many understand that the revitalization of languages can help strengthen communities and make people proud of their heritage.

Still others have dedicated themselves to languages and language learning – they have spent their careers and their lives improving their knowledge and skills and passing this information on to their children, their families, friends and neighbors. This strong passion, rooted in values and beliefs closely held by many, provides a solid foundation – a foundation on which the actions of this Plan can rest in order to support the strengthening of all of the NWT's Official Aboriginal Languages.

"Relearning your language is not easy, it has to be a passion, it has to be something that you care so much about, that you'll do anything to get it. It is a lot of work; our work is cut out for us; each and every one of you has that responsibility"

NWT Languages Commissioner
Sarah Jerome

1.0 INTRODUCTION

For many years, northerners have talked about the importance of Aboriginal languages. Strong, passionate voices, both young and old, have pointed out that languages are fundamental to our diverse cultures, that they help us to become who we are and provide us with the ability to express our unique view of life, ourselves and the world. But while these voices have been heard, the use of Aboriginal languages in the NWT has decreased. In homes, in places of business and in communities, the percent of the population speaking Gwich'in, Inuvialuktun, Inuinnaqtun, Inuktitut, North Slavey, South Slavey, Tlicho, Chipewyan and Cree has become lower and lower. Elders and language experts have argued that this situation is hurting us by limiting the transmission of knowledge and culture between generations. They have also said that we must fight the pressures of dominant languages like English and French by making a commitment to learning Aboriginal languages and taking steps to keep the languages alive and vibrant.

The first *Official Languages Act* in the NWT was passed in 1984. Over the years, legislation, plans, programs and services in support of languages have been undertaken. Some have worked and others have not. The operation of the Language Bureau, provision of training for interpreter/translators and Aboriginal Language and Culture Specialists, schooling in Aboriginal languages, establishment of a Language Commissioner as well as the production of materials and books are just some of the activities that have occurred. In addition, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) has worked with Aboriginal governments, the Government of Canada, language communities and non-government organizations to identify and take action to support languages.

In 2001, the GNWT issued *Revitalizing, Enhancing and Promoting Aboriginal Languages* to guide its multi-year activities in support of Aboriginal language use. The same year the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories established the Special Committee on the Review of the *Official Languages Act*. In its subsequent report, the Committee identified 65 recommendations for changes to language legislation, organization, programs and services offered by the Government of the Northwest Territories. A number of the recommendations from the report were implemented. Legislative Assembly's interest in language matters has continued during the intervening years and, most recently, the Standing Committee of Government Operations, examining results of language activities to date, issued its report titled, *Reality Check: Securing a Future for Official Languages of the Northwest Territories* (2009) with a number of recommendations.

In March 2010 a symposium titled, *NWT Aboriginal Languages Symposium: A Shared Responsibility* was held in Yellowknife.

The meeting was co-hosted by the Minister Responsible for Aboriginal Languages, the Honourable Jackson Lafferty and the Chair of the NWT Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Government Operations, Mr. Kevin Menicoche. Over 250 people including elders, specialists, educators, youth and language community representatives tackled the difficult issues that will need to be addressed if Aboriginal languages are to be made stronger. The participants worked to identify a vision, goals and priorities for each of the NWT's nine official Aboriginal languages. As well they debated how best to increase the number of language speakers.

From the Symposium one message was very clear. That message was that while governments and other organizations can provide important support for Aboriginal languages, the decision to learn and use our Aboriginal languages rests with individuals and their families. If people feel that language is important then they will use it – they will protect it, nourish it and help it grow and develop as times change.

This Plan focuses on strengthening people's understanding of the importance of Aboriginal languages; encouraging people to use their languages; and establishing practical approaches to the provision of government services in Aboriginal languages. The Plan builds upon the fact that language communities must lead the way in determining priorities and encouraging language use. It also reinforces the important role of the GNWT and Aboriginal Governments in supporting language activities, both in terms of Aboriginal language revitalization and by providing services in Aboriginal languages to the public. Primarily the report is focused upon establishing actions that will have a direct impact on the programs and services offered to revitalize and support Aboriginal language use.

Strengthening Aboriginal languages requires commitment and dedication that is even greater than has been the case during the past decade. It also requires time and effort and, in a world in which the use of dominant languages are ever more pervasive, actions to strengthen Aboriginal languages will require all northerners to work closely together with a common vision.

2.0 SHARING RESPONSIBILITY FOR ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES

Aboriginal languages belong to those who use them. Ultimately, languages survive and flourish if those using the languages see them as useful and important.

Parents, Families and Communities

Parents and grandparents are the first teachers of children. Language is one of the first things that they teach to children. Parents have a critical responsibility in encouraging and supporting their child's development. If parents and grandparents place an emphasis on learning an Aboriginal language, then children are much more likely to have an interest and to become fluent.

But, not every parent is fluent in his or her own mother tongue (the language a child first learned). Many have lost the ability to understand and speak their language. And as a result, they made need some help in encouraging and teaching their children. Grandparents, family members, friends and community residents can all assist parents in supporting their child's learning of their language.

It has been said that, "it takes a village to raise a child" and that comment is very true when it comes to languages. When the people of a community speak an Aboriginal language with each other, there are lots of opportunities for children and non-speakers to learn – whether it is at a camp on the land, hunting, playing, buying groceries at the store or simply sitting, drinking tea and talking.

> "Let's not forget that each one of us as individuals or families or organizations can make choices to use and support our languages"
>
> Dr. Leslie Saxon
> Department of Linguistics
> Certificate in Aboriginal Language Revitalization
> University of Victoria

Other actions, taken by communities to support language use in community life, can further expand the opportunities to learn – conducting meetings and ensuring signs are written in Aboriginal languages, operating a community radio as well as using Aboriginal languages during community events are all practical examples of how communities can support Aboriginal language use. These activities can be combined with the actions of governments, language and cultural organizations and others to provide a broad range of language learning and language use opportunities.

Language Communities

All NWT Official Aboriginal Languages are used in more than one town or village. When considered together, these groupings of towns, villages and cities in which each language is spoken, make up a language community. Language communities are important because they include all of those with an interest and direct experience in each language. Working together, members of language communities can plan, conduct and assess the success of activities and programs that are designed to meet the specific needs of their particular language. As we know, the needs of each language are different – some have more speakers, some have fewer; some towns and villages are linked more closely to traditional land-based activities, others are not; and some language communities have a wider range of materials and references to use in language revitalization than do other language communities.

We also know that some of the NWT's Official Aboriginal Languages link to language communities outside the NWT's borders. The use of Inuinnaqtun (Nunavut), Inuktitut (Nunavut), Gwich'in (Yukon and Alaska), Cree (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, etc.) and Chipewyan (Saskatchewan, Alberta, etc.) is quite common in other jurisdictions. In many cases, there are a number of supporting organizations, agencies and governments that provide support for these languages. Language users and language and culture organizations in the NWT can, and should, link with the appropriate cultural and language organizations in these other jurisdictions and collaborate on activities, programs and services. This does occur at the present time in some language communities, but there is considerable room to increase cooperation.

Overall, given the diverse circumstances facing Aboriginal languages in the NWT it is essential to focus activities at the language community level. Identification of language needs, coordination of community-based efforts, supporting of various programs and services all can be organized at the language community level. In addition, assessing the success of activities and adjusting actions to increase success is also a key responsibility of language communities.

Governments

Governments can only succeed in supporting language use if they have the active participation and commitment of their citizens. This being said, government actions can have a strong influence on the protection, revitalization and language modernization efforts.

Governmental responsibilities with respect to strengthening Aboriginal language use are primarily related to reinforcing and supporting activities at the community and language community levels. Government support of activities is essential in that all governments - federal, territorial and Aboriginal have resources, organization and the ability to support and influence the activities of their citizens.

Governments can also use their authority to establish organizations and agencies to provide programs and services. In some cases these bodies are at "arms-length" and have the flexibility to work very closely with others to investigate, manage or make recommendations on key matters. Education authorities, the Official Languages and Aboriginal Language Revitalization Boards, Aurora College have all been established by the Government of the NWT and are directed by either elected or appointed representatives of the public to manage the services of important programs and services.

Government actions are also important because they highlight the value and importance of Aboriginal languages to the general population. For example, government can demonstrate the importance of languages by providing services and programs in the Aboriginal languages, providing financial resources to support language activities, coordinating and collaborating with language communities, providing education and training programs for children, youth and adults as well as providing technical and expert advice when it is required.

It should be noted that self-government negotiations all include the subject matter of jurisdiction over the promotion and protection of Aboriginal language. The Tlicho land, resources and self-government Agreement provides the Tlicho Government the power to enact laws in relation to the protection and promotion of the Tlicho language. Future self-government agreements will likely contain similar provisions, as Aboriginal language is clearly integral and integral to an Aboriginal community.

Other Organizations and Agencies

There are a number of organizations and agencies that operate at arms-length from governments and provide specific programs and services in support of Aboriginal languages. In the NWT these groups include, cultural and language organizations, community services agencies, school authorities, Aurora College, the NWT Literacy Council and organizations that offer language programming as part of a broader program array (e.g. early childhood development programs). Most of these organizations are funded, to some degree, by governments, but have some flexibility in setting their own goals and activities.

The role of these organizations and agencies in supporting language activities can be important. In accordance with their overall mandate, these organizations have specialized expertise that can be combined with the knowledge and skills at the community level to design, develop and deliver programs and services. In addition, some can provide technical advice to strengthen and improve the language programming efforts.

3.0 THE IMPORTANCE AND USE OF ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES

Languages are the foundation on which cultures are created. Languages distinguish peoples, provide identity and make language speakers part of unique groups. As one speaker said during the recent NWT Aboriginal Languages Symposium, "Our language defines us as a people – it makes us Dene".

What the Research on Languages Tells Us

Reviewing research and academic journals supports these views. Research highlights the importance of language to social cohesion, self-esteem and the support of growth and development of people. For example, one researcher noted, "These languages reflect distinctive histories, cultures and identities linked to family, community, the land and traditional knowledge. For many First Nation, Inuit and Métis people, these languages are at the very core of their identity," (May Jane Norris: 2007).

This suggests that through the use of languages, people express their world-view, their value and self-worth, they define relationships, collect and share knowledge and solve the challenges that are faced as a result of change. The *Report on the Status of B.C. First Nation Languages 2010* noted that, "Each language encompasses immense cultural, historical, scientific and ecological knowledge. This knowledge is vital not only for the language communities themselves, but also for the sum of all human knowledge," (pg. 8).

The loss of Aboriginal and other indigenous languages (the languages of first peoples) around the world is seen as a very serious matter as, "The extinction of each language results in the irrecoverable loss of unique cultural, historical and ecological knowledge. Each language is a unique expression of the human experience of the world," (UNESCO, 2003). The research on languages and language loss goes even further and suggests that the loss of language, results not only in the loss of knowledge, but can also contribute to personal and societal dysfunction. In fact, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples noted that revitalization of traditional languages is a key component in the creation of healthy individuals and communities.

Aboriginal Language Use in the NWT

Even with the recognition of the importance of language, the loss of indigenous languages around the world is dramatic. Studies suggest that 6000 languages currently exist, but that "in most world regions, about 90 percent of languages may be replaced by dominant languages by the end of the 21st century," (UNESCO, 2003). The same report notes that over 50 percent of existing languages are currently losing speakers.

In Canada, there are about eleven Aboriginal language families and more than 50 languages. Over the past few decades, Aboriginal language usage across Canada has decreased significantly. This trend has occurred in both southern and northern Canada. Only three of Canada's Aboriginal languages, Cree, Inuktitut and Ojibway have been identified as having a large enough population base to assure long-term language survival without significant interventions (Norris: 2008). For the remainder of languages, planned actions and activities are likely needed to support long-term language survival.

"The first thing we have to do is clear our mind of guilt."

Dr. Don Taylor
Department of Psychology
McGill University

Statistical surveys in the NWT over the past twenty years have documented the reduction in Aboriginal language use. Information released by both the NWT Bureau of Statistics and Statistics Canada has demonstrated a general weakening of overall Aboriginal language use. This tendency can be seen in all of the NWT Aboriginal language groups although the trend is stronger in some groups than in others.

Recent publications from the NWT Bureau of Statistics noted that the percent of Aboriginal northerners that speak an Aboriginal language continues to drop. Table 1 below provides a high level summary of this information by region and indicates the change in Aboriginal language use over time.

TABLE 1
Percentage of Aboriginals that Speak an Aboriginal Language
1989 – 2009

REGION	1989	1999	2009
NWT	55.6	45.1	38.0
Beaufort - Delta	34.4	27.5	22.1
Dehcho	78.6	64.9	58.2
Sahtu	85.6	64.0	53.3
South Slave	39.5	32.7	25.0
Tlicho	96.1	98.1	90.4
Yellowknife Area - Detah - Yellowknife - N'dilo	94.0 36.6 -	77.4 21.9 -	59.9 18.0 46.2

Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics, 2009.

The NWT Bureau of Statistics *2009 NWT Community Survey* also highlighted some disturbing information with respect to the number of those with the ability to converse in Aboriginal languages. Five of the NWT's Official Aboriginal languages now have less than five hundred people with the ability to converse; six of the languages now have less than 1,000 people, eight languages have less than 1,500 and only one NWT official Aboriginal language community, Tlicho, has more than 2,500 people with the ability to converse.

Table 2
Persons with the Ability to Converse
2009

Language	Number of Persons
English	42,724
French	3,915
Inuktitut	240
Invialuktun	499
Inuinnaqtun	196
Tlicho	2,617
Cree	222
Chipewyan	663
North Slavey	1,167
South Slavey	1,458
Gwich'in	228

Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics, 2009

The limited numbers of Aboriginal language speakers in many of the NWT language communities presents a particular challenge. Finding speakers with the necessary knowledge and skills, providing opportunities for speakers to interact with those that wish to learn languages and development of learning materials become increasingly problematic as the number of speakers decreases.

4.0 THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

When thinking about strengthening Aboriginal languages use, it is important to consider the challenges and opportunities that must be faced. Both challenges and opportunities will need to be considered and in some cases addressed during the development of any languages plan. As concerns for Aboriginal languages have grown in the NWT, there has been considerable discussion of these matters and it is useful to discuss both challenges and opportunities briefly.

The Challenges

Some of these challenges that must be faced in the development of Aboriginal language plans relate to conditions and situations within the NWT or the language communities themselves. Others are based on national and international trends over which the people of the NWT have little direct control. Five key challenges are discussed below.

> "The challenges we face today with the efforts to revitalize our languages is like trying to walk through a thick bush of willows. It has been so easy to blame others for the state of our language. So in my talk of this thick willow, I will not point my fingers at anyone. Rather I remind us that the responsibility for the life and death of our language is mine, and it is ours alone."
>
> Alestine Andre

The Value Placed on Dominant Languages

Like many indigenous languages around the world, dominant languages, in our case English and French are becoming more and more commonly used in all aspects of life. In the NWT, English is the primary dominant language at this point in time. The 2006 Census data shows that over 99 percent of NWT residents reported that they have the ability to converse in English. As well, French language also holds a dominant position with just over 9 percent of territorial residents reporting that they have the ability to converse in the language. None of the NWT's official Aboriginal languages matches these levels of use at the territorial level – although some may be quite strong at the community level.

Because of the strength of English and French in general usage, in communities, schools, businesses, government, across Canada and internationally, many people believe that they must focus their own language learning and those of their children on developing language capacity in the dominant languages.

Some people argue that they "need English to get a good job" or "need English to get into college and university" or "because it is easier to use English to discuss some matters". While these statements are often accurate, they ignore the importance and value of Aboriginal languages.

Communications and Technology

The communities in the NWT are no longer as isolated from the activities of the Canada and the world as they once were. Forty years ago, many communities had no television, no telephones, and no computer linkages. The most common communication technology at the time was radiotelephones, newspapers and magazines that arrived by mail, letters or commercial radio broadcasting. Other than these limited means of communication, people had to travel outside their home communities to meet and discuss matters, or to obtain the details of events that were happening in the NWT, across Canada and around the world.

Times have changed – communication media is now immediately accessible in every NWT community. Citizens, young and old, can, from their homes, businesses and schools, immediately access information by the Internet, television, radio, downloads, voice and text as well as satellite communications. And, they can access vast libraries of information. Some Aboriginal language programming is available using modern technologies, but the vast majority of information is in English and French.

As well as creating challenges, the emergence of communications and technologies also provide opportunities for the collection, documentation and distribution of Aboriginal language materials. Using the technologies in a manner that is useful to strengthening Aboriginal language use becomes a key opportunity for consideration.

Recognizing the Residential School Legacy

Past government policies undermined the use of Aboriginal languages. Residential schools resulted in strong reduction of Aboriginal language use. By preventing use and sometimes punishing children for using Aboriginal languages, while emphasizing the importance of English and French, many residential schools isolated children from their first language. This process continued over a number of generations, continually eroding the Aboriginal language skills of those who were enrolled in residential schools.

"I think that people have to realize what residential school has done to us. Stealing our language, because I wasn't very strong in my language when I can back from residential school."

Lucy Lafferty

As a result, a number of Aboriginal adults in the NWT no longer speak their Aboriginal language – some understand and do not speak, while others lost all their abilities to understand and communicate in their mother tongue. Because of their limited language skills and their views on the importance of English and French, some of these former students did not emphasize the importance of Aboriginal languages to their children – even after residential schools were closed and the government support for Aboriginal language instruction in the schools was increased.

Recognizing the history and impacts of residential schools is important to developing strategies and activities to strengthen Aboriginal language use. Addressing the needs of adults, including those who do not currently use their mother tongue, as well as supporting children to learn are both of great importance.

Dialects

Dialects frequently include special words or pronunciations and sometimes include different ways of saying things. Dialects are generally found within a specific region or group of people. Dialects are not languages themselves, as they share many common structures, words and expressions with others in the language community. In every language community in the NWT, dialectical differences can be found. Dialects are a strong component of most languages.

A problem comes when the debate over which dialect is "right" begins to take away from strengthening the language as a whole. For example, debates regarding dialect differences can delay or stymie terminology development that is critical to the survival of languages. Because of the critical state that is faced by NWT official Aboriginal languages, it is important to make certain that debates related to dialects do not take away from the overall goal of strengthening each of our Aboriginal languages.

Collaboration and Cooperation

In language work there are many people and organizations involved - elders, language specialists, teachers, linguists, language and cultural organizations, government staff, leaders, residents and many others. Finding ways for collaboration and cooperation can result in many benefits.

Learning from others, making best use of available resources and sharing in successes are just some examples. When collaborating, it is necessary to share control and responsibility with others. This can be challenging, as sometimes decisions and actions don't follow the path that some of those involved think should be taken.

Historically, collaboration and cooperation on language activities has been inconsistent. Some excellent results have occurred through collaborative efforts. In other cases, good projects have been planned, started and then failed because those involved were not prepared to collaborate and cooperate with others. The challenge will be to the correct balance of activity – but without collaboration and cooperation between all involved, success will be very difficult.

The Opportunities

Because of culture and history, many people in the NWT have very strong feelings about the NWT's official Aboriginal languages. These feelings provide a positive environment in which to develop passion and commitment for the strengthening of Aboriginal languages.

Four key opportunities, on which to build a plan of action, are described here.

Dedication and Commitment

There is an interest in many communities, and among a number of people, to strengthen Aboriginal language use. While a number of adults do not currently speak Aboriginal languages, there is strong and growing sense that being able to speak a language is important and that passing languages on to children would be beneficial. This general interest is supported by many elders and by a number of language-related organizations.

It is also important to recognize that a number of the language specialists are currently working in support of Aboriginal language training and education programs, either in schools, Aurora College or within a non-government organization. Many of these individuals have spent years working on the development of curricula, programming and teaching materials and have a considerable expertise and experience as well as a strong commitment to the languages.

Elders are probably the most passionate proponents of the importance of Aboriginal languages. Their language skills, developed during the changing times of the past fifty years, provide a wealth of understanding and knowledge that is tremendously valuable. Securing the support and advice of elders is a particularly helpful resource both within the family, towns and villages, as well as to the language community as a whole.

The Bush and the Land

While the social, political and economic conditions across the NWT have changed radically during the last fifty years, most people still have immediate and direct access to the lands outside of our towns and villages. During the NWT Aboriginal Languages Symposium, many people spoke about the importance of learning Aboriginal languages on the land. Elders spoke of the rich grammar, vocabulary and syntax that exist as a result of the land and the experiences of living in land-based Aboriginal cultures. They suggested that the land must be an important tool in language teaching.

> I think that language is so important, that once you learn your language you feel so much more a part of your ancestors and your culture and your traditions."
>
> Ruth Wright

The land can be easily accessed in most communities. Taking advantage of the learning opportunities provided by such access is a tremendous resource to language programming.

Government Commitment to Action

Unlike most areas in Canada and around the world, there is opportunity in the NWT in the fact that governments, both Territorial and Aboriginal, see strengthening Aboriginal languages as important to the long-term sustainability of cultures and communities. For example, the NWT Legislative Assembly has included within the *Official Languages Act* the requirement for a review of the Act every five years to make certain that progress is being made to support language use. Both levels of government agree that knowledge of Aboriginal languages leads to a sense of identity and could lead to healthier people and healthier communities.

There will always be debate about whether governments spend enough money in support of Aboriginal languages. This debate has occurred in the past in the NWT and it will likely continue in the future. However, because the governments acknowledge the importance of Aboriginal languages any plans have a much better chance of receiving support. The commitment of the involved governments is an essential ingredient to making any Aboriginal language plan successful.

Lessons Learned From Language Revitalization Efforts Around the World

In North America and around the world there have been a number of successful and effective language revitalization efforts. Many of the world's indigenous languages are being threatened. In response, language communities and their supporters are taking action to limit the declines in indigenous language use.

As a result, it is possible for us to learn from the actions that have been taken elsewhere. We can learn about strategies, activities and conditions that could be used or adapted for our situation. We can also consult with people that are directly involved in these activities and learn from them what is required to be successful. Some of the most well known revitalization efforts, those of the Navajo in the United States and the Maori in New Zealand, are well documented and provide a useful perspective on the challenges that a language community must face in order to successfully revitalize language use. In every case, there are lessons to be learned.

No doubt, there will be many other challenges and opportunities identified and discussed as this plan is finalized and implemented. Thinking about challenges and opportunities can help to identify those actions that have the greatest potential for success. Overall, the best result will come from taking advantage of the opportunities and building successful actions that address the challenges.

5.0 LANGUAGE COMMUNITY VISIONS, GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Any broad plan for strengthening Aboriginal languages in the NWT must include leadership by language communities. Language communities play major roles in promoting, planning, delivering, monitoring and evaluating language activities. In many cases, language communities are best placed to lead language activities and to be accountable for the results. Of course, sometimes language communities need help. As a result, there are times when language communities may need to call upon experts, specialists or governments to assist them in their efforts.

This Plan recognizes the essential role of language communities, outlines ways to support language communities in their work and sets mechanisms in place to encourage collaboration and cooperation between language communities.

Many language communities have developed language plans to guide activities over the years. Some of these plans remain current, others have lapsed and still others probably required review and renewal. All of the plans have, as a goal, the strengthening of languages.

In preparing this Plan, the GNWT felt it was critical to seek the advice of language communities. In addition to reviewing the plans and reports from all of the language communities and the reports of the Legislative Assembly, the GNWT also decided to host the NWT Aboriginal Languages Symposium in March 2010. During the NWT Aboriginal Languages Symposium language community members were asked to consider the work that has been done to support languages in the past, and address several key questions. They were asked:

- How would you define the health of your language?
- What do you think needs to be done to revitalize your language?
- What is currently being done to support the revitalization of your language?
- What opportunities are there to change or improve the current activities?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of (leadership, community family and individuals) the language communities to revitalize languages?
- What is the vision for your language – 10 to 20 years into the future?
- What are the goals for your language during the next five to ten years?

The Symposium participants provided many comments and suggestions. These comments and suggestions serve as a framework for action to address the needs of each of the NWT's official Aboriginal languages.

These frameworks are a "work in progress". Many of the language communities are continuing to develop their vision, goals and action plans. Nevertheless, the results from the Symposium provide an excellent "snapshot" of direction for each language.

Each of the sections below outlines the results of the considerations at the Symposium and suggests a "path forward" for strengthening each of the languages.

"The theme of this conference is "Our Language: A Shared Responsibility". Meaning it is our responsibility, as individuals, sitting around this table, as parents, grandparents, teachers, Elders"

Hon.Jackson Lafferty
Minister Responsible for Official Languages
Government of the Northwest Territories

Cree

Currently, it is estimated that there are 222 Cree speakers in the NWT. Most of these speakers are located in the southern region of the NWT, in communities including Fort Smith, Fort Resolution and Hay River. The Cree language is considered to be a strong Aboriginal language in Canada. Across the northern areas of several provinces, several dialects of Cree are spoken. Overall, Cree language use is stronger outside the NWT than it is within the NWT's boundaries.

Table 3
Persons with the Ability to Converse in Cree, By Age Category

Total No. of Persons	%	0-14	%	15-39	%	40-59	%	60+	%
222	100	22	9.9	48	21.6	96	43.2	56	25.2

Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics, *2009 NWT Community Survey*

Over 65 percent of Cree speakers are at least 40 years of age. This suggests that the "intergenerational transfer" of the Cree language to children is relatively weak and of concern.

When considering the status of the Cree language in the NWT, the language group representatives had a number of suggestions for action. Their views are summarized below.

Table 4
Cree Language Community Vision, Goals and Key Actions

Vision Cree is recognized, respected and supported by the community. Youth will learn their culture and language and use them in all aspects of their lives.
Goals ▪ Increase the visibility of Cree ▪ Strong linkage of language and culture ▪ Stable, long-term funding to support Cree language programs ▪ An array of language learning that meets set standards and is available to children and youth as well as adults (for example, immersion programming for young children and in the schools; language training for teachers, GNWT staff) ▪ Events celebrating the Cree language
Key Planned Actions ▪ Promote stronger language instruction (immersion programs in schools) ▪ Seek increased, long-term, stable funding to finance language programs ▪ Develop language standards and credentials for instructors

Chipewyan

At the present time there are about 660 people in the NWT who have the ability to converse in Chipewyan. Chipewyan speakers are, for the most part found in the southeastern regions of the NWT in communities such as Fort Resolution, Detah and Lutsel K'e. Chipewyan is also spoken in some other NWT communities as well as in the northern areas of several provinces (for example: Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba). Chipewyan use outside the NWT is somewhat stronger than it is within the NWT.

Table 5
Persons with the Ability to Converse in Chipewyan, By Age Category

Total No. of Persons	%	0-14	%	15-39	%	40-59	%	60+	%
663	100	37	5.6	118	17.8	206	31.1	302	45.6

Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics, *2009 NWT Community Survey*

The vast majority of Chipewyan speakers are over 40 years of age (about 77%). In fact, just over 45% of all Chipewyan speakers are at least 60 years of age. This suggests that only a very limited number of youth are learning the Chipewyan Language.

During the Symposium, members of the Chipewyan language community identified a number of measures to strengthen language use within the language community.

Table 6
Chipewyan Language Community Vision, Goals and Key Planned Actions

Vision The Chipewyan language is recognized, respected and spoken in homes and the community. Opportunities for learning Chipewyan exist for young children, school students and adults. Our language is used in public meetings and by leadership.
Goals ▪ Development of a centre to develop language curriculum, train educators, interpreter translators and delivers language and culture programs ▪ Trained and certified language teachers in communities supported by resource people ▪ Improved language education in schools ▪ Establishment of an "On the Land" Program to celebrate culture, history and language ▪ Using technology to teach and distribute language materials ▪ Development of a historical/heritage centre
Key Planned Actions ▪ Cultural learning programs in the community involving both youth and elders ▪ Creation of an Aboriginal Languages and Culture College to serve all NWT language communities ▪ Formation of a language leadership council

Gwich'in

The Gwich'in language is primarily used in the communities of the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA) in and near the Mackenzie River Delta. This area includes four communities including: Fort McPherson, Tsiigehtchic, Inuvik and Aklavik. There are an estimated 228 NWT residents that have the ability to converse in Gwich'in. The language is considered in serious risk, even though the language is also used in areas of the Yukon Territory and the State of Alaska (United States of America).

Table 7
Persons with the Ability to Converse in Gwich'in, By Age Category

Total No. of Persons	%	0-14	%	15-39	%	40-59	%	60+	%
228	100	18	7.9	40	17.5	41	18.0	129	56.6

Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics, *2009 NWT Community Survey*

The results of the consideration by the Gwich'in language community members in attendance at the NWT Aboriginal Languages Symposium are outlined in Table 8.

Table 8
Gwich'in Language Community Vision, Goals and Key Planned Actions

Vision In five years, Gwich'in language will be revitalized and no longer "critically endangered". Gwich'in citizens will live, breathe and speak Gwich'in.
Goals ▪ Immediately establish an action plan for Gwich'in revitalization ▪ Ensure partnerships between elders and linguists so they work together ▪ Through a centralized language centre develop language learning programs, interpreter/translator training, Aboriginal language instructors ▪ Increase the number of land-based programs for school children ▪ Offer immersion programs (language/culture) ▪ Increase use of Gwich'in in the churches
Key Planned Actions ▪ Develop a centralized NWT language/cultural centre for all Aboriginal languages ▪ Create a new facility for GSCI / GTC ▪ Report to communities and leadership on this NWT Aboriginal Languages Symposium

Inuvialuktun / Inuinnaqtun / Inuktitut

This family of languages includes languages spoken in the Beaufort area of the Northwest Territories including the communities of Inuvik, Paulatuk, Ulukhaktok, Tuktoyaktuk and Sachs Harbour. It also includes the Inuktitut language spoken by Inuit who live in the NWT, primarily in the City of Yellowknife.

The Inuktitut language family is considered to be relatively strong at the national level due to the strength of Inuktitut in the Nunavut Territory and in the Nunavik Region of the Province of Quebec. However, there are relatively few people living in the NWT who are able to converse in Inuvialuktun and Inuinnaqtun. About 196 are currently identified as being able to converse in Inuinnaqtun, 499 can converse in Inuvialuktun and 240 can converse in Inuktitut. Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun continue to have strong language linkages to the Nunavut Territory.

Table 9
Persons with the Ability to Converse in Inuvialuktun, Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut, By Age Category

Language	Total Persons	%	0-14	%	15-39	%	40-59	%	60+	%
Inuvialuktun	499	100	16	3.2	100	20	157	31.5	226	45.3
Inuinnaqtun	196	100	11	5.6	42	21.4	89	45.4	54	27.6
Inuktitut	240	100	64	27	67	27.9	87	36.3	22	9.2

Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics, *2009 NWT Community Survey*

During the Symposium, the language group members outlined their view of the vision, goals and key planned actions for the language family.

Table 10
Inuvialuktun, Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut Language Community Vision, Goals and Key Planned Actions

Vision The language will be the first language of the Inuvialuit Settlement Area, with everyone using the language to read, write and speak. All young people will be able to speak the language.
Goals ▪ Making the language cool for the youth ▪ Promoting the language use everywhere in the communities ▪ Producing more learning material, CD's, books, music ▪ Keeping up with technology, computers that will have a dictionary in our language ▪ Language classes for the community ▪ Immersion classes for the first years of school, Pre-school, Kindergarten through grade 3 ▪ Elders being compensated for their knowledge ▪ Fully knowledge and trained educators in all institutes
Key Planned Actions ▪ Increase culture and languages activities and training in communities. ▪ Start/restart local community language boards to discuss goals/ objectives. ▪ Networking development between the regions to support languages

North Slavey

The North Slavey language is centred in the communities in the Sahtu Region of the NWT with linkages to the south. North Slavey is spoken in Colville Lake, Deline, Tulita and Fort Good Hope and an estimated 1,167 people are able to converse in North Slavey. The language includes several dialects.

Table 11
Persons with the Ability to Converse in North Slavey, By Age Category

Total No. of Persons	%	0-14	%	15-39	%	40-59	%	60+	%
1,167	100	143	12.3	405	34.7	380	32.6	239	20.5

Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics, *2009 NWT Community Survey*

The age distribution of speakers within the North Slavey language community is better balanced than is found within some of the other language communities. This being said, anecdotal information, received during the development of this Plan, suggests that youth are now less conversant in the Slavey Language than they were in the past.

Those attending the Aboriginal Languages Symposium built their comments upon earlier language planning that has occurred within the language community and described a number of broad goals and detailed actions to strengthen North Slavey language use.

Table 12
North Slavey Language Community Vision, Goals and Key Planned Actions

Vision The North Slavey language and culture will be strong, and people will be proud. Our children will know their language and culture. There will be strong knowledge of Dene Laws for the whole community and for the youth.
Goals ▪ Dene perspective and traditional knowledge will be valued in homes and schools ▪ Dene language will be the main language of the community and the school
Key Planned Actions ▪ Sahtu cultural centres will be built in communities ▪ Barriers will be removed between organizations (pre-school, K-12, community government, GNWT, Feds, etc.) so that organizations won't be working in isolation. ▪ Education in Dene and English skills is strong and valued equally ▪ Implement language laws like Nunavut to make changes that strengthen Aboriginal language and culture

South Slavey

The people who speak South Slavey live primarily in the Deh Cho Region and other southern areas of the NWT. An estimated 1458 are able to converse in the language. Language linkages to the northern areas of the Provinces of Alberta and British Columbia have been established.

The South Slavey language is primarily spoken in the communities of Wrigley, Fort Simpson, Jean Marie River, Trout Lake, Nahanni Butte, Fort Liard, Fort Providence, Kakisa, Hay River and on the Hay River Reserve.

Table 13
Persons with the Ability to Converse in South Slavey, By Age Category

Total No. of Persons	%	0-14	%	15-39	%	40-59	%	60+	%
1458	100	134	9.2	369	25.3	594	40.7	361	24.8

Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics, *2009 NWT Community Survey*

Language community members described a clear vision for the future and outlined a series of goals to be achieved during the period of this strategy.

Table 14
South Slavey Language Community Vision, Goals and Key Planned Actions

Vision

In ten to twenty years we see…

- Elders' role in the community will be restored; progress in self-care and healing is on going.
- In their language, community members know, express, and actively support community values.
- All the good programming already being done is better coordinated, and expanded.
- Mandatory use of the Dene Kede curriculum in the schools will be enforced and effective. Student success reports will include Dene Kede.
- South Slavey immersion is available in schools, with supports to families for home use of the language.
- Throughout the region, there is mandatory use of the South Slavey language.

Goals

- Regional immersion camps involving whole families, on the land.
- Regional youth language conference.
- District Education Authorities continues to be accountable and transparent for use of language funds
- Language funding is administered by regional first nations
- Formal, frequent, supported mentorship opportunities for Elders and youth to spend time together.
- The missing link of the language abilities of the middle-aged group will no longer be a significant problem.
- Honestly recognize the health of our language, and elevate its status and importance.

Key Planned Actions

- The Dehcho Region will adopt a language use strategic plan, as part of a bold language policy. The plan will include Dehcho First Nation and its communities.

Tłı̨chǫ

The Tłı̨chǫ language has the largest number of speakers of any of the Aboriginal language communities in the NWT. It is estimated that 2,617 people in the Northwest Territories can converse in the language. This represents about 36 percent of the total NWT residents who can converse in an Aboriginal language. The language is primarily spoken in the Tlicho Settlement Area, within the North Slave Region. Specifically, the language is spoken in the communities of Behchoko, Whati, Gameti and Wekweeti. There are also Tlicho speakers also living in Detah and N'dilo.

Table 15

Persons with the Ability to Converse in Tłı̨chǫ, By Age Category

Total No. of Persons	%	0-14	%	15-39	%	40-59	%	60+	%
2617	100	485	18.5	1196	45.7	658	25.1	278	10.6

Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics, *2009 NWT Community Survey*

The language community members attending the Symposium identified the following vision, goals and key planned actions to support the strengthening of the Tłı̨chǫ language.

Table 16

Tłı̨chǫ Language Community Vision, Goals and Key Planned Actions

Vision

Our vision is that 75 percent of Tłı̨chǫ people will be fluent in their language in the next ten years. Children and their grandparents will be able to converse and participate in traditional skills while using the language. The people will support each other and activities will be undertaken to preserve and support the use of Tłı̨chǫ language so youth speak fluently.

Goals

- Immersion programs in the early childh[ood programs and schools
- A centralized location be established f[rom which materials and resources can be shared and teaching of children can be supported; elders can use to tell stories;
- A healing program to encourage comm[unity involvement
- Development of additional language re[source materials for teachers
- Training for interpreter/translators and [cultural instructors
- Use of technology to keep language us[e alive

Key Planned Actions

- Language centre in the region by 2015 [which will develop oral language program, promote language and culture[, provide immersion day care programming, provide space for elders [to visit and tell stories, train interpreter translators and support and [train new parents to teach their children
- Within Schools: Provide language imm[ersion programs to grade 3; ½ time immersion for grade four students; hav[e a completed language curriculum for 2012, fully implement Dene Kede c[urriculum by 2015, have elders in all NWT schools to teach girls and boys, t[rain and employ culture and language instructors, train instructors i[n immersion techniques
- Standardize use of the language by 2[012
- Offer a good and effective land progra[m/ culture camp/ traditional knowledge/ healing program
- Develop a website by 2011 to support [the development of print and online materials
- Public information in the Tlicho langua[ge: signs, information, etc.

Language communities have a critical role in promoting and supporting the strengthening of languages. Further, collaboration and cooperation between language communities and governments is essential to the success of any NWT languages plan. The results from the discussions at the NWT Aboriginal Languages Symposium outline views of what must occur if success is to be achieved. Language communities can build upon this work, add additional information and perspectives and seek broad support from language speakers and those wishing to use the languages.

Together there is strength to achieve our goals.

6.0 AN NWT VISION FOR ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES

A vision describes what we would like to see in the future. It defines how we feel things should work out once all of our activities have been completed. Generally, visions describe the long-term view – what would we like to see ten or twenty years from now. In this case, the vision describes how we want Aboriginal languages to be used in the future.

After talking with many people in locations across the NWT it appears that there is broad agreement on a general vision for Aboriginal languages. People believe that our vision should be:

> "The students of today were raised with computers and see no limitations. They see horizons of opportunities. Wow to have that outlook on life!"
>
> Fibbie Tatti

Aboriginal languages are used extensively, on a daily basis, to communicate in NWT homes and communities, as well as within the organizations and agencies providing services to the public.

To achieve this vision it is important to recognize and agree on our shared understanding of some of the key beliefs and values that will support our activities. During the development of this plan, eleven shared understandings were identified and these are listed below:

1. Aboriginal languages strengthen the individual and group identities of Aboriginal peoples.
2. A strong sense of identity is a key to healthy people and healthy communities.
3. Aboriginal languages contribute to the overall body of knowledge of human understanding and history their loss would harm all people.
4. Languages provide a means of communications, and also transmit the history, social, emotional, spiritual knowledge of cultures and people.

5. All people can assist in strengthening Aboriginal languages. Unless people use their languages, the languages will die.

6. Languages must grow and change to meet the changing realities in the world.

7. There are tremendous pressures resulting from dominant language (English and French) use at the territorial, national and international levels.

8. The circumstances faced by each of the NWT official Aboriginal languages have unique characteristics.

9. Responsibility for the use, development and revitalization of languages is shared between citizens, language speakers, language communities and governments and their agencies and organizations.

10. Language communities themselves must determine the priorities for action to meet their particular circumstances, but they must be able to obtain support and advice when it is required.

11. Coordination and collaboration between language communities is essential.

Individual language communities may have visions for their own particular situations – which highlight and focus attention on their key issues and concerns. Based on comments received during the preparation of this Plan, these visions will be quite similar in their intent to the broad vision described above.

The vision and the shared understandings set the foundation for this Plan. They will be used to guide our planning and provide us with a statement by which we can measure our success in the future.

7.0 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals and objectives describe what is to be achieved by the activities that will be carried out under the Plan in order for the vision to become a reality. They help to focus activities and set priorities for action.

The *NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan* key goals and objectives concentrate efforts in four areas. These are:

Goal One - Promote Aboriginal language use;
Goal Two - Speak Aboriginal languages;
Goal Three - Write Aboriginal languages; and
Goal Four - Provide government services in Aboriginal languages.

The key goals and objectives build upon each other. In other words, the work on Goal One will increase success with Goal Two. Success on Goals One and Two will strengthen success on Goal Three and achievement of Goals One, Two and Three will result in Goal Four being more easily completed. This being said, work can be initiated in each of the goal areas from the beginning of the Plan and can continue throughout the period of the Plan.

Successful achievement of all of the goals and objectives will result in a strengthening of the Official NWT Aboriginal Languages. A description of the purpose and importance of each goal area can be found below.

Goal One
Promote Aboriginal Language Use

Objectives

- **Increase public awareness and understanding of the importance of Aboriginal languages;**
- **Recognize and celebrate Aboriginal language use; and**
- **Demonstrate leadership in promoting and using Aboriginal languages.**

In order for Aboriginal languages to flourish, people must strongly believe that language use is valuable and important. Given the challenges faced by Aboriginal languages in the NWT, a very active effort is required to describe the importance of Aboriginal language use and confirm the value of the languages to all NWT residents.

This goal will be achieved by communicating the importance of languages, using and celebrating the use of Aboriginal languages and by a demonstrating leadership in promoting and using Aboriginal languages.

Goal Two
Speak Aboriginal Languages

Objectives

- **Encourage family-centred community and educational activities supporting the conversation use of Aboriginal languages;**
- **Increase opportunities for speaking Aboriginal languages in formal and informal settings; and**
- **Encourage use of Aboriginal languages during cultural activities.**

Language learning and use begins with listening and speaking. Children first learn languages by listening, repeating and then speaking. Adults who learn second languages learn in a similar manner. As a result, getting people to speak Aboriginal languages is critical to any efforts to strengthen language activity.

Language activities need to begin at home, if that is possible, and should be extended into the community using a family-centred focus. Educational programs beginning with pre-school children, in, for example, a language nest setting, can begin with an emphasis on learning sounds and conversation.

Everyone can participate in these efforts. Those with strong speaking skills can help others. Those who can understand languages, but do not speak – can also assist and can begin to test out their own language skills in simple conversations. Those with no knowledge can open themselves to learning and can commit to try to learn Aboriginal languages.

This goal and the supporting objectives have been developed so that there can be a sharp increase in the number of speakers over the next ten years. Achievement of this goal will help to create a path for language revitalization. It will also allow each language to be strengthened in a manner that, while recognizing the differences that currently exist, will substantially improve language strength.

Goal Three
Write Aboriginal Languages

Objectives

- **Develop standards for written language use;**
- **Enhance languages through agreement on terminology and language use; and**
- **Use writing to communicate stories, legends and other information.**

We are in an age when communications can no longer be simply based on direct contact and verbal conversations. Today, accessing information also means being able to read books, access information on the Internet and communicate with others by text over long distances. As a result, if Aboriginal languages are going to thrive and then remain strong, the ability to communicate in writing will be important.

Written language skills are generally best learned after a person has the ability to converse. Building on speaking skills, many language learners can build their skills at reading and writing, relatively quickly. But, in the case of the NWT's official Aboriginal languages, there are some challenges. For example, to communicate effectively, it is important that the language symbols, grammar and vocabulary are generally the same for all those using the language. This means that agreement must be reached as to letters, grammar and similar matters. While this is the case in some Aboriginal languages, it is not in others. Work is needed to confirm a standard writing system and to build better understanding of how languages will be written.

Once written materials are produced it is essential that people know how to find and access the materials. As a result, making information widely available and developing catalogues of materials, for use by all northerners is important.

Goal Four
Provide Government Services in Aboriginal Languages

Objectives

- **Set GNWT language service levels, focusing on those government services of importance to the public**
- **Provide active offer for services in Aboriginal languages**
- **Require oral and written language services to meet established standards**

The GNWT is committed to having its staff use Aboriginal languages to provide services to those members of the public wishing to receive services. To achieve this end, it is important that the GNWT have published standards of service and that outline the services to be provided. As well, the delivery of these services must be effectively monitored. The current guidelines for Aboriginal language service delivery require review and renewal. The process of revising these guidelines will help to identify key priority areas for service delivery and make the public aware of how they may access the services they require.

It is important that those providing government services have the language skills and abilities necessary to effectively deliver those services. As a result, government must set standards for service delivery and ensure that the staff delivering services is competent and effective. Establishing standards to ensure that oral and written communications are of a high quality is necessary so that Aboriginal languages are protected.

In any strategy, the goals and objectives identify key areas in which success is required so that the long-term vision can be achieved. The goals and objectives listed here provide a framework to guide activities over the next ten years. They can also provide a useful reference when new activities are considered – People planning activities and programs can ask, "Does the planned program help us move towards the achievement of our goals and objectives?"

8.0 SUPPORTING STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The vision and the goals and objectives of the *NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan* have now been outlined. Next, we must think about what actions are required to support our goals. Building on the work of the language communities, and other organizations and individuals who have contributed their views, ideas and suggestions, this chapter describes five broad areas of activity to support the vision, goals and objectives. These areas of activity are called Supporting Strategies and Actions. They include:

- Collaborate and Cooperate in Strengthening Aboriginal Languages;
- Provide Aboriginal Language Education and Training;
- Enhance Organizational Support for Language Activities;
- Utilize Technologies to Support Goals; and
- Language Planning and Measuring Success.

Some of the actions included in the areas actually support multiple goals. As well, it is important to recognize that, over time, additional activities will be identified and included in the overall efforts associated with the *NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan.*

Collaborate and Cooperate in Strengthening Aboriginal Languages

Successful strengthening of Aboriginal languages requires extensive cooperation between families, communities, organizations and governments. Each has a critical role to play in strengthening language use, revitalization and service efforts. Overall success requires the sharing of information, project results, accountability, and best practices.

The actions in this area suggest that there must be increased collaboration and definition of roles and responsibilities. Establishing agreements between the GNWT and Aboriginal governments can do this. These agreements will outline the commitment of governments to work together, define the roles and areas of collaboration, identify funding to be used for program activities and outline how mutual accountability for actions will be addressed. This Supporting Strategy also includes actions to increase information exchange as well as the review and streamlining of the Aboriginal language community funding processes.

Finally, the Supporting Strategy outlines actions to increase collaborative and cooperative actions through which leadership, language specialists and northerners can work together to promote and celebrate Aboriginal language use.

Specific actions included in this Supporting Strategy and Action area are listed below.

Table 17
Planned Actions – Collaborate and Cooperate in Strengthening Aboriginal Languages

PLANNED ACTION	GOAL(S)	EXPECTED OUTCOME
Establishing Agreements		
Establish formal agreements describing collaboration, cooperation, language activities and accountability between the GNWT and Aboriginal governments involved in language activities	1,2,3,4	The GNWT and Aboriginal Governments will execute formal agreements related to language activities that described roles, planned activities, collaboration and expected results
Establish schedule for periodic meetings of Aboriginal and GNWT leadership to discuss language matters	1,2,3,4	Regular, senior level discussions of languages will occur to focus attention on activities, results and problem solving
Set formal arrangements to coordinate language related activities of GNWT Teaching and Learning Centres (TLCs) and Aboriginal Government language organizations	1,2,3	There will be improved coordination and collaboration between activities of language communities and TLC staff

Set up formal agreements with language organizations in other provincial, territorial and states (Alaska) involved in supporting common languages (e.g. Cree, Chipewyan, Slavey, Inuinnaqtun, Inuktitut and Gwich'in)	1,2,3	By linking with others in the language community who are located outside the NWT, NWT language specialists will benefit from materials, information and research studies that have already been completed
Support the establishment and periodic renewal of Language Action Plans for each Language Community	1,2,3	All language communities and the GNWT will have completed ongoing plans to guide program and service decisions
Increasing Information Exchange		
Identify and formally circulate information regarding alternative approaches to preserving old audio and videotapes. Utilize the expertise of the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre to support preservation efforts.	2,3	Preservation of unique and important information that has been recorded previously will provide the next generations with direct access to original legends, stories, interviews and speeches.
Publish, at least annually, information on language related activities being conducted by various NWT organizations and agencies	2,3	Regular exchange of information on activities will increase knowledge and use of best practices
With the agreement of governments, establish a clearinghouse to identify, consolidate and circulate language materials and information on best practices	1,2,3	A single point of access for information on language materials will strengthen information exchange and permit language specialists to build upon the work of others
Establish a website to serve as an access point for information on Aboriginal language activities	1,2,3	Easy access to information will stimulate cooperation and collaboration

Establish multi-year funding agreements between the GNWT and Aboriginal Governments related to support for language revitalization and education activities	1	Multiple year agreements will result in predictable funding levels and permit work to continue on an uninterrupted basis
Eliminate delays in funding between the GNWT and Aboriginal Governments resulting from slow confirmation of program funding from the Government of Canada	1	Annually, Aboriginal Governments will receive funding in a timely manner
Review current language community funding allocation methodologies to determine whether it is possible to strengthen results and reward program success	1	Examination of the current funding methodology will determine whether the existing approach matches the priorities of this Plan
Annually research and prepare a listing of potential funding sources for language related activities and distribute the listing to all language communities	1,2,3	A listing will provide language communities with full knowledge of funding sources that could support particular language projects.

Collaborative and Communication Activities		
Organize collaborative efforts to profile the importance of Aboriginal language use to leadership, parents and the general public	1	Organized activities including legislators, GNWT and Aboriginal governments will demonstrate strong support for Aboriginal languages
Increase profile of Aboriginal languages through negotiation and profiling activities with the Government of Canada and national Aboriginal organizations	1	Joint efforts to reinforce the importance of Aboriginal languages organized in a collaborative manner with MLAs, GNWT Ministers, Aboriginal leadership and others
Prepare, in cooperation with language communities, "tool kits" that can be used to assist specialists in planning, organizing and delivering language activities (for example, promotional efforts, family literacy programs, courses, language development activities, etc.)	1,2,3	Providing common "tools" to assist language community workers will help to support strong effective programs
Conduct periodic language community and territorial forums to discuss progress related to Aboriginal Language use, examine best practices and celebrate successes	1	Regional and territorial meetings to discuss languages can help ensure that the strengthening of Aboriginal language use is proceeding in all areas
Organize meetings of language specialists to assist with the planning of key initiatives	1	Governments receiving advice from language experts to support program and service delivery
Support language specialists visitation of projects and language activities held in other language communities	1	Increased understanding of best practices and opportunities

Provide Aboriginal Language Education and Training

Fundamental to the transmission of language between one generation and the next is successful language learning by members of the younger generations. In the NWT, this means that youth and adults who do not currently speak an Aboriginal language must have formal and informal opportunities to learn – some of these opportunities will be in traditional, land-based settings, while others are likely to occur in schools and other learning centres.

The actions outlined in the chart below are based on the concept of family and community literacy. This suggests that efforts to strengthen Aboriginal language use begins with the family – parents, grandparents and children and that programs and supporting activities must be structured to reflect the critical importance of the family. It also suggests that actions are required to support adults, particularly parents, who have lost their language skills, so that they may relearn their language with their children.

The Supporting Strategy covers a full range of activities including the strengthening of early childhood programs by strengthening language requirements and supports in language nest programs; the establishment of language curricula in schools and the development of such as immersion programs in schools; and the development and delivery of adult Aboriginal language programming in community learning centres and at Aurora College Campuses. In addition, the plan identifies the development of technical training for interpreter/translators and language specialists as a priority. The actions describe a key role for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment in the development of a comprehensive Aboriginal language education strategy, as well as, new policies to support increased attention related to Aboriginal language learning within the overall education system.

Table 18
Planned Actions - Provide Aboriginal Language Education and Training

PLANNED ACTION	GOAL(S)	EXPECTED OUTCOME
General		
Establish strategy for family literacy in the NWT's official Aboriginal languages	1,2,3	Collaboration in the development of family literacy strategy which outlines planned activities, roles and responsibilities of the involved parties
Prepare an Aboriginal Language Education and Training Strategy for activities within the education system	2,3	An overall strategy, developed by GNWT (ECE) will describe the priorities, planned activities and expected outcomes for early childhood, schools and adult programs.
Employ Elders and other expert language speakers as language mentors	1,2,3	Elders and others will teach language skills thus increasing the skills of others and introducing new speakers to their language
Early Childhood Programs		
Establish language requirements for language nest programs	2,3	Minimum language requirements will be included for all language nest programs by ECE in cooperation with language communities

Support early childhood development providers in the organization and delivery of language activities	2,3	Professional advice and technical support will be useful to many language nest providers
Support preparation of materials for use in early childhood programming	2,3	Supporting the sharing of early childhood materials will assist programs and children
Monitor performance of language nest programs	2,3	Enrolled children will have basic understanding of the Aboriginal language by the time they enter the school program
Schools		
Develop and implement Aboriginal language curricula for use in all NWT schools for first and second language learning situations	2,3	Develop and implement an Aboriginal language curricula (k – 12)
Design and develop Aboriginal language immersion programming for school students	2,3	Students will be able to complete their studies in an official NWT Aboriginal language
Review the *Aboriginal Language and Culture Based Education Directive* with a goal of ensuring that there are language related studies associated with all cultural activities	2,3	All cultural activities associated with approved funding will be delivered in an Aboriginal language
Consider adding the requirement that all high schools students enroll in a minimum of six credits of Aboriginal language training (other than their home language) before receiving a high school diploma	2,3	All students will have exposure to at least one additional language prior to graduation

Identify and organize student language studies in locations away from schools	2,3	Planning instruction away from schools will provides the opportunity for the use of a broader range of instructional techniques
In collaboration with community organizations, agencies and individuals increase the number of language learning opportunities in land-based situations	1,2,3	Land instruction will provide the opportunity to blend cultural and language activities in a traditional learning manner
Focus immediate learning activities on conversational usage of Aboriginal languages	2	Student learning begins with listening and oral communications. Success will result in students being able to carry on conversations with others
Increase the numbers of Aboriginal language speakers working with students in schools	1,2,3	Introducing additional Aboriginal language speakers into the school will increase the opportunities for students to use their language skills and will raise the profile of speakers.
Adult and Post Secondary Programs		
Increase opportunities for Aurora College teacher education students to learn Aboriginal languages	2,3	More teachers in NWT schools will be familiar with and be able to use Aboriginal languages in their work in the classroom
Include within all Aurora College certificate and diploma programs a course on Aboriginal language acquisition	2,3	There will be increased college student awareness and Aboriginal language capacity

Establish an accredited and ongoing interpreter/translator training program utilizing both campus and community-based learning activities	2,3,4	Training will provide skill development and accreditation for interpreter/translators
Provide professional development opportunities for Aboriginal language learning for teachers	1,2,3	Increased Aboriginal language skills among NWT teachers
On a regular basis (at least annually), deliver specialized training for health, social services and justice interpreter/translators	2,3,4	Interpreter/translators working in key areas of government services will have increased technical language skills
Include, as part of the Education Leadership Program (Principal Training) components on Aboriginal language importance, awareness and leadership of the creation of language learning opportunities for education personnel in schools.	1	School-based leadership will increase staff awareness of Aboriginal languages and support language learning by educators and other school staff.
Provide technical and professional training for language specialists so that they can increase their knowledge and skills in the planning, organization and delivery of programs.	1,2,3,4	Language specialists are needed in all language communities to plan, organize and lead activities. Existing and future specialists will continue to develop their skills.
Develop Aboriginal language programs for use in the delivery of community-based evening programming	2,3	Parents and other adults will have an opportunity to learn the languages of the community in which they live
Develop packaged learning programs and materials to support home study and learning of Aboriginal languages.	2,3	Materials will support family centred learning.

Work Place Training		
Provide opportunities for GNWT employees to develop language skills to support Aboriginal language use in the work place	2,3,4	GNWT employees with language skills and those who have lost their mother tongue will be able to converse with each other and the public
Provide all GNWT employees with language orientation to ensure their awareness of the importance, value and priority of language use	1	All GNWT employees will be familiar with the sounds, structure, orthography and importance of Aboriginal languages
Profile and celebrate GNWT employees who use Aboriginal languages in the delivery of services to people	1	Profiling of GNWT staff who actively utilize their mother-tongue or learned Aboriginal languages will be recognized

Enhance Organizational Support for Language Activities

Governments have key roles in supporting the strengthening of Aboriginal languages. They do this through the passage of laws and the establishment of policies. As well, they supply financial and other support through programs and services provided by government departments and agencies. Ensuring that such departments and agencies are appropriately structured and have the mandates, staff and funding necessary to carry out their responsibilities is important.

At the present time, the GNWT has two language boards, made up of membership appointed by the Minister Responsible for Official Languages. Each provides advice and guidance on language matters. By all accounts, these bodies, while well-intentioned, have had limited success in fulfilling their responsibilities over the last few years. This being said, having an at-arms-length body providing guidance to the Minister can provide an excellent forum for all parties to come together and plan out actions that will strengthen languages.

This Plan proposes both a streamlining of the current board structure, with the elimination of the Official Languages Board and a refocusing of the Aboriginal Languages Revitalization Board by opening the nominations process to a broader range of candidates and revising the board's mandate to include promotion of Aboriginal languages, as well as, the direction of a new, special purpose authority called the Aboriginal Language Centre (ALC).

The ALC will serve as the focal point for cooperation, collaboration and activities related to languages. It will include staff with the specific tasks of providing support to language communities' activities; organizing, directing or managing language related program activities of a territorial nature; promoting Aboriginal language use; conducting research related to Aboriginal languages and supporting the Aboriginal Language Revitalization Board (ALRB). The overall emphasis of the Centre will be developmental in nature, with a minimum of administrative duties associated with, for example, the allocation of funding. These administrative tasks will remain the responsibility of the GNWT.

To effectively support the ALC, it may be useful to associate it with another territorial organization such as Aurora College which is also territorial in nature and has direct responsibilities related to both language education and research matters. In this manner, the appropriate at-arms-length status could be maintained, while corporate and administrative functions could be shared for cost savings.

The organizational changes suggested will require changes to the current legislation. In addition, in its recent review of the *Official Languages Act,* the Legislative Assembly has identified a number of legislative changes for consideration. A first priority is needed for those changes that strengthen and support Aboriginal language preservation, development and revitalization. Certainly the adoption of a regime that focuses efforts in Aboriginal language revitalization is a good place to begin these actions.

Table 19
Planned Actions - Enhance Organizational Support for Language Activities

PLANNED ACTION	GOAL(S)	EXPECTED OUTCOME
Place responsibility for GNWT Aboriginal language service management and revitalization activities in separate organization units	1,4	Dividing responsibilities for GNWT Aboriginal language services and revitalization will allow each unit to focus directly on their area of responsibility
Establish a secretariat with responsibility for oversight of GNWT Aboriginal language services	4	Establishing a unit with the sole responsibility for supporting and monitoring GNWT service levels in Aboriginal languages will provide additional focus on the department and agency language activities
Establish an Aboriginal Languages Centre (ALC) under the direction of the Aboriginal Languages Revitalization Board (ALRB)	1	The Centre will provide a single, arms-length body tasked with key responsibilities related to coordination, direction of key activities and provision of advice to the Minister

Eliminate the Official Languages Board	1	Overlap and duplication of effort will be eliminated and activities will be focused in the remaining ALRB
Focus mandate of the ALRB on support for collaboration and cooperation; language promotion, supporting language community action plans; direction to the Aboriginal Language Centre and providing advice to the Minister	1	Through the Board language community representatives will direct key aspects of language revitalization. They will also provide the Minister with advice on an ongoing basis
Appoint members of the ALRB based on recommendations from Aboriginal Governments and MLAs, as well as language and cultural organizations	1	The Minister will select Board members, from each language community, based on nominations from an number of governments as well as cultural and language organizations
Provide single window services, either through GNWT offices or through the use of technologies (e.g. telephone services) in communities	4	All Aboriginal language speakers will be able to access program information either from a single window service centre in their community, or by telephone
Other Legislative and Policy Change		
Review the current GNWT Aboriginal Languages Services Guidelines to ensure that they reflect languages used in communities as well as where there is significant potential service demand	4	Language guidelines will be reviewed and adjusted (or reconfirmed) to reflect the commitment of the GNWT to provide services

Establish a comprehensive legislative and/or policy regime that emphasizes Aboriginal language protection, revitalization and modernization	1,4	A strong regime will assist in demonstrating the importance of language use and supporting maintaining, revitalizing, protecting and modernizing Aboriginal languages
Establish a comprehensive legislative and/or policy regime to address GNWT Aboriginal languages service requirements	1,4	A regime that clearly describes GNWT service requirements related to Aboriginal languages will help clarify duties and responsibilities
Review current *Official Languages Act* to reflect desired changes	1,4	Revised legislation will reflect the new regimes related to Aboriginal language revitalization and service requirements
As a minimum, focus service guidelines on programs and services offered to the public in the areas of health, social services, housing and justice	4	Services in Aboriginal languages will be provided for those programs where there is a direct relationship between the public and the service provider

Utilize Technologies to Support Goals

A wide range of technologies is now available to improve the storage and transmission of information. These technologies can be extensively used to document, preserve, and increase access and to support Aboriginal language programs. These technologies do not replace the people who have the knowledge and skill resulting from years of language use, but rather provide ways in which this information and knowledge can be transmitted to others.

In the past twenty years, the use of communications technologies has exploded. Many of the various technologies can be harnessed to strengthen Aboriginal language usage. Of course technologies themselves cannot stand alone, but must be supported by the involvement of those that use the language best. Elders, teachers, language specialists can, with guidance, make use of technologies. We know as well, that children today use many of these technologies on a daily basis. Using digital recording technologies, broadcast technology, computer technology can all assist in actions to strengthen language use.

It is also essential, when looking to the longer-term health of the NWT's official Aboriginal languages that every effort is made to preserve records of past language use. Audio and visual recordings from the past fifty years of conversations, singing and meetings all provide a "window on the past" and preserving this material so that it may be used by future generations to understanding and learn language is very important. There are many audio and videotapes that are presently in storage, but are slowly deteriorating. Finding ways to preserve this material is very important.

Table 20
Planned Actions - Utilize Technologies to Support Goals

PLANNED ACTION	GOAL(S)	EXPECTED OUTCOME
Broaden Use of Existing Technological Tools		
Increase use of Aboriginal languages on radio to support understanding and use	1,2	Additional Aboriginal language broadcasts will occur
Implement "single window" telephone services in Aboriginal languages to support GNWT program and service delivery	4	All Aboriginal language speakers will be able to access program information either from a single window service centre in their community, or by telephone
Encourage use of existing functions in the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre to preserve existing recordings (primarily audio/video) in a digital form that is searchable and accessible	1,2,3	Increased preservation efforts will result in documentation and permanent records that can be referred to by those using the language in the future
Support Development of New Tools		
Actively support the finalization of the Unicode Dene Font	3	A single font will be available to support all Dene languages, improving efforts to document languages

Install Dene Fonts on all GNWT computers and train staff in their use	3	All GNWT employees will have access to fonts for use in correspondence and other printed materials
Set standards for GNWT software to support Aboriginal language programs and services and the use of Aboriginal language fonts	3	Software standards to support Dene fonts and language recording will improve data collection, simplify information transmission/preservation
Support innovation in utilization of technologies to support Aboriginal language use	1,2,3,4	A wide variety of technologies are available to support creating and recording of music, voice, video. Use of these technologies will assist wider use of Aboriginal languages

Language Planning and Measuring Success

All aspects of the *NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan* must be monitored to determine whether the activities are successful. Monitoring can also help us understand what can be done to continually improve the programs and services offered. The monitoring, evaluation and accountability for activities is a shared responsibility involving language communities, governments and the residents of the NWT.

Aboriginal language use in the NWT has reached a critical stage. Revitalization actions have a limited period in which to become effective - before many of those with the best understanding of the languages are no longer with us and the language use weakens further. As a result, it is particularly important that actions taken are focused effectively and, if they do not work, they are adjusted or terminated to make way for better programs. By taking steps to plan, monitor and evaluate actions, all involved are committing to finding the best possible activities.

As it is the people of the NWT that will, in the end, determine the overall health of Aboriginal languages, it is critical that they be made fully aware of the plans and results of the activities that occur. Regular, effectively communicated, public reports on activities and results are, as a result, important to all efforts to strengthen languages.

To further support efforts to measure success, key intended outcomes have been identified for each of the goals of the Plan. These outcome measures are intended to measure change over time. Each will be used to assess progress during the period of the Plan. The key intended outcomes are identified in Table 21.

Table 21
Key Intended Outcomes

Promote Aboriginal Language Use	Speak Aboriginal Languages	Write Aboriginal Languages	Provide Government Services in Aboriginal Languages
Increased understanding of the importance of Aboriginal languages by members of the public (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) and leadership	Over the next decade, there will be a 20 percent increase in the percentage of Aboriginal language speakers in every language group	Agreement upon and adoption of standard writing system for Dene languages	Revised and implemented GNWT policy guidelines for Aboriginal language services outlining what will be provided and to what standard
Expanded use of Aboriginal languages in the Legislative Assembly, at Annual Aboriginal government Assemblies and in public meetings	Comprehensive array of full and part-time, Aboriginal languages courses offered to school students and adult learners on an ongoing basis	Broad distribution of a suitable font for use in printing Dene languages	Public access to services in Aboriginal language speakers, either through personal contact or electronically during normal business hours
Increased investment by the GNWT, Canada and Aboriginal Governments in language programs	Increased number of family-centred learning programs offered in all communities on an on-going basis	Accessible, public catalogue of produced Aboriginal language books, recordings	Provision of orientation on Aboriginal languages to all new GNWT staff members within six months of being hired

	An increased number of immersion programs (full and part-time offered to school students	Coordinate points (e.g. resource ce sharing of v materials a accessible communitie	l access web site(s) / ntres) for vritten nd information to all language s	Increased use of Aboriginal languages in the GNWT work place

To support public reporting, establishing a standard framework that ca n be used to identify and describe the planned activities, define what is to be achieved, when the action is completed, and describe the results of the efforts, would be useful. Called a "results management and accountability framework" (RM AF), such a framework can be shared between all organizations and can serve as the basis for reporting and sharing inf rmation. It is important that an RMAF document be as simple and clear as possible, but it must also communicate the necessary information to permit a good understanding of each action and its results. The Aboriginal Language C entre, in consultation with language communities and program funders, could create a suitable RMAF. A model of an RMA F is provided in Appendix 4.

Table 22
Planned Actions - Language Planning and Measuring Success

PLANNED ACTION	GOAL(S)	EXPECTED OUTCOME
Developing Plans		
Plans and strategies for language activities will be finalized	1,4	The GNWT, Aboriginal Governments, organizations and agencies will have approved plans outlining their planned actions
Plans and strategies will include measurable results and describe how the results will be measured	1,4	All plans will be prepared in a manner that identifies expected results and includes a description of how and when results will be measured and reported
Publicize plans and activities to ensure that residents are aware of priorities and activities	1	Citizen participation in and support for strengthening Aboriginal languages is essential to success – as a result, citizens will know what is happening and what is planned to happen

Mea	suring Success and Adjusting Plans		
Dev res (RM	elop standard framework to record lts management and accountability AF) information	1,2,3,4	Framework allows for the recording and reporting of intended outcomes – permitting effective planning and management of activities
Rec and	ularly review the results of activities plans and make the results public	1	Review results will help specialists to refine and improve language programs and services
Rep Abo Boa	ort the results of all reviews to riginal Languages Revitalization rd	1	The Board will serve as a primary means for the coordination and collaboration and will include representatives from all language communities
Cha not	nge and/or eliminate activities that are showing results	1	Available resources will be focused on successful activities

To Sun marize - Supporting Strategies and Actions

The fiv Supporting Strategies and Actions described above include over seventy actions. The actions are intended to suppor the achievement of broad goals and objectives described earlier in this document. Over time, additional actions will be identified for inclusion and some of the identified actions may be amended to reflect changes in the overall langua ge environment. This being said, it will take dedication, commitment and strong will to achieve the vision, goals and ob ectives described in this Plan.

9.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND PLAN REVIEW

When a plan is prepared it is important to know what needs to be done. The earlier chapters of this Plan have talked about these matters and described actions that can be taken so that Aboriginal Languages can be strengthened. In addition, it is also necessary is to consider how and when the actions that form the Plan will be carried out. By considering how and when actions will be implemented and considering the challenges and issues that are likely to arise, everyone involved has a better understanding of what must happen for there to be success.

In every plan there are some actions that are very important and must occur at the beginning. Frequently these actions establish the foundation for long-term activity and are required before other actions can take place. Getting the sequence of actions right is important.

Another consideration is that some actions may require considerable effort and resources. Resources required may be financial, human or technical. These resources can come from existing people, programs or monies or they may come from additional resources allocated to support the priority activities. Frequently, the overall amount of resources available is not known when a plan is put in place. When this occurs it is important that the plan is carefully monitored and adjusted to the resources that are available. In every case, matching the resources to the priority activities is a critical step in implementation planning.

"Every employee of the Public Service should understand how to offer language services and where to direct clients to receive those services. It must become easy for the public to find and access language services."

Kevin Menicoche
MLA, Nahendeh
Chair, Standing Committee on
Government Operations
Government of the Northwest Territories

This chapter looks at the questions surrounding implementation and describes an approach to implementation.

The Overall Approach to Implementation

This NWT Aboriginal Language Plan has four overall goals. Actions in support of each of these goals will begin with the initial implementation of the Plan. It is expected that all of the actions outlined in this Plan will be initiated within three years of the Plan's implementation.

Of course, some of these activities will be ongoing, while others are one-time actions necessary to support the achievement of the goals. Other actions will be relatively limited at the beginning and grow over time. This being said, not everything can happen at once.

Implementation is divided into four phases. The timing of actions within the phases overlap somewhat. This being said, general timing of the phases can be described in the following manner:

Phase I – Immediate activities through 2011

Phase II – 2011 through 2012

Phase III – 2012 and beyond

Phase IV – immediate through 2013

The first phase of implementation is expected to begin immediately after the finalization of the Plan. It includes a range of activities to set the base for action over the next ten years. Actions to be completed during the first phase of activity will include those that:

- Build public and government support for languages;
- Build collaboration and cooperation;
- Improve existing language programs and activities; and
- Develop supporting plans, tools for language specialists and strategies.

The second phase of activities will be characterized by actions that:

- Support community-based and family-based education and literacy activities;
- Encourage increased speaking of Aboriginal languages
- Revise GNWT legislation and policies;
- Establish the Aboriginal Languages Centre;
- Eliminate of the Official Languages Board and the revisions to the mandate of the Aboriginal Languages Revitalization Board;

- Provide enhancement of the delivery of Aboriginal language programming in schools and Aurora College;
- Enhance actions to preserve existing recordings (audio and video) for future reference and use;
- Provide advanced language training for specialists, educators and interpreter/translators;

The third phase of activities will be focused on actions related to strengthening written Aboriginal language use and improving GNWT service delivery. Actions will include those that:

- Provide active offer of programs and services in Aboriginal languages by the GNWT;
- Implement language curriculum in schools and Aurora College;
- Develop accepted standards for written language use;
- Organize regular and ongoing meetings of language specialists to develop and record terminology; and
- Implement education programs to support GNWT employee use of Aboriginal languages.

The fourth and final phase of the Plan will focus upon monitoring and evaluation of actions. This phase will also feature the adjustment of activities to take advantage of best practices and the lessons learned from the Plan implementation to that date. Actions will include:

- Regular publicizing of action results;
- Adjustment of actions to support successful activities and to amend or delete those that have not been successful; and
- General review of the results of the Plan.

It is important to note that nothing in the actions identified above is intended to reduce existing activities in advance of changes being made. In other words, current activities will be maintained at the current levels until adjustments occur.

A detailed schedule of actions, including identification of the phase during which each activity is expected to occur can be found in Appendix 2 of this plan.

Resourcing Implementation

The implementation phases are expected to begin immediately following the finalization of this plan. A number of actions outlined in the Plan relate to adjusting activities within existing administrative structures and programs. Many of these activities can begin quickly.

Some of the other actions will require additional human, technological or financial resources and, as a result, they cannot be undertaken until the required resources are secured. Seeking out financial support for these activities may prove challenging and cooperative and collaborative efforts may be required.

Adjusting Plans and Reviewing Plan Progress

All plans require adjustment and review as they are being implemented. Some aspects of the plan will work very well. Others, for reasons that cannot be predicted, may work less well, or not at all. For the long-term vision of strengthening Aboriginal languages to be achieved, it is important that this Plan be reviewed on a regular basis and adjusted when there is a requirement to do so.

This Plan will be reviewed every three years after its publication. The three-year period provides enough time for actions to be planned and implemented and for at least some of the initial results of the work to be seen. This will mean that over the next ten years, the Plan will be reviewed three times to make certain that actions are resulting in a strengthening of Aboriginal language use.

Implementation is critical to the success of any Plan. Even the best plans, if they are poorly implemented, can fail to achieve the desired results. Careful thought and effectively planned actions is the key to the long-term success, the achievement of the Plan's goals and objectives and, ultimately, a Territory in which the official Aboriginal languages are used extensively in everyday life of our communities.

10.0 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Aboriginal languages are essential to the culture and heritage of the Northwest Territories. There are nine Official Aboriginal Languages in the NWT. Residents of the Northwest Territories are very concerned about the status of these languages. This concern was demonstrated at the NWT Aboriginal Languages Symposium held in the spring of 2010. Elders, youth, language speakers and non-speakers all articulated the importance of languages as they define identity, describe history, social structures, scientific and other knowledge as well as being a critical way by which the Aboriginal cultures of the NWT are expressed.

Over the past few decades, Aboriginal language use has declined. The number of people able to carry on a conversation in the NWT's Aboriginal languages has become more limited. Further, a large proportion of those who can speak the language are getting older and the transmission of language to the younger generation is not as strong as many would like to see.

> "I challenge each of you to go home, take up that torch, and start working on your language, revitalized it. Don't wait for somebody else to do it. Don't point fingers and say so-and-so should do it. You take that responsibility. I challenge you, each of you, to take on a mentor and be strong in your language. It takes a whole community to educate a child. That is so true."
>
> Sarah Jerome
> NWT Languages Commissioner

The *NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan* sets out an ambitious framework for action over the next decade. It outlines a vision, goals and objectives and actions – beginning with actions to strengthen people's understanding of the importance of Aboriginal languages and then focusing on increasing the number of people that can speak and write the official NWT Aboriginal languages. Finally, the Plan describes steps to be taken to strengthen the GNWT's service delivery in Aboriginal languages.

To achieve the Plan's vision and make Aboriginal languages regularly used in the homes and communities of the NWT, there must be broad involvement and support. Protecting, maintaining, revitalizing and modernizing Aboriginal languages is a shared responsibility – shared between individuals, families, governments, educational institutions and all of the other organizations that wish to see stronger, healthier communities.

We know, from looking at the experiences around the world, that we can strengthen Aboriginal languages in the NWT – but it will take hard work, dedication and thoughtful action to be successful.

APPENDIX 1

NWT ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES - A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY
THE PLAN AT A GLANCE

VISION			
Aboriginal languages are used extensively, on a daily basis, to communicate in NWT homes and communities as well as within the organizations and agencies providing services to the public.			
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES			
Promote Aboriginal Language Use	**Speak Aboriginal Languages**	**Write Aboriginal Languages**	**Provide Government Services in Aboriginal Languages**
Increase public awareness and understanding of the importance of Aboriginal languages	Encourage family-centred, community, and educational activities supporting conversational use of Aboriginal languages	Develop standards for written language use	Set GNWT language service levels, focusing on those government services that are of high importance to the public
Recognize and celebrate Aboriginal language use	Increase opportunities for speaking Aboriginal languages in formal and informal settings	Enhance languages through agreement on terminology and language use	Provide active offer for services in Aboriginal languages
Demonstrate leadership in promoting and using Aboriginal languages	Encourage use of Aboriginal languages during cultural activities	Use writing to communicate stories, legends and information	Require oral and written language services to meet established standards

SUPPORTING STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS
Colllaborate and Cooperate in Strengthening Aboriginal Languages – Successful strengthening of Abo>riginal languages requires extensive cooperation between families, communities, organizations and gov/ernments. Each has a critical role to play in language revitalization and service efforts, but overall success req\uires the sharing of information, project results, accountability and best practices.
Provide Aboriginal Language Education and Training – Fundamental to the transmission of language bet\ween one generation and the next is successful education and training. In the NWT this means that youth and adults who do not currently speak an Aboriginal language must have formal and informal opportunities to lear rn – some of these opportunities will be in traditional, land-based settings, while others are likely to occur in sch ools and other learning centres.
Enhance Organizational Support for Language Activities – Governments have key roles in supporting the stre engthening of Aboriginal languages. Governments deliver support through departments and agencies. Ens suring that such departments and agencies are appropriately structured and have the mandates, staff and fun ding necessary to carry out their responsibilities is important.
Utilize Technologies to Support Goals – A wide-range of technologies is now available to improve the storage and transmission of information. These technologies can be extensively used to document, preserve, increase acc ess and to support Aboriginal language programs. These technologies do not replace the people who have the knowledge and skill found through years of language use, but rather provide ways in which this information and knowledge can be transmitted to others.
Language Planning and Measuring Success – All aspects of the *NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan* must be mo nitored to determine whether the activities are successful and to determine what can be done to continually the improve programs and services offered. The monitoring, evaluation and accountability for activities is a sha ared responsibility involving language communities, governments and the residents of the NWT.

1. Aboriginal languages strengthen the individual and group identities of Aboriginal peoples.

2. A strong sense of identity is key to healthy people and healthy communities.

3. Aboriginal languages contribute to the overall body of knowledge of human understanding and history their loss would harm all people.

4. Languages provide a means of communications, and also transmit the history, social, emotional, spiritual knowledge of cultures and people.

5. All people can assist in strengthening Aboriginal languages. Unless people use their languages, the languages will die.

6. Languages must grow and change to meet the changing realities in the world.

7. There are tremendous pressures resulting from dominant language (English and French) use at the territorial, national and international levels.

8. The circumstances faced by each of the NWT official Aboriginal languages have unique characteristics.

9. Responsibility for the use, development and revitalization of languages is shared between citizens, language speakers, language communities and governments and their agencies and organizations.

10. Language communities themselves must determine the priorities for action to meet their particular circumstances, but they must be able to obtain support and advice when it is required.

11. Coordination and collaboration between language communities is essential.

KEY INTENDED OUTCOMES			
Promote Aboriginal Language Use	**Speak Aboriginal Languages**	**Write Aboriginal Languages**	**Provide Government Services in Aboriginal Languages**
Increased understanding of the importance of Aboriginal languages by members of the public (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) and leadership	Over the next decade, there will be a 20 percent increase in the percentage of Aboriginal language speakers in every language group	Agreement upon and adoption of standard writing system for Dene languages	Revised and implemented GNWT policy guidelines for Aboriginal language services outlining what will be provided and to what standard
Expanded use of Aboriginal languages in the Legislative Assembly, at Annual Assemblies of Aboriginal governments and in public meetings	Comprehensive array of full and part-time, Aboriginal languages courses offered to school students and adult learners on an ongoing basis	Broad distribution of a suitable font for use in printing Dene languages	Public access to services in Aboriginal language speakers, either through personal contact or electronically during normal business hours
Increased investment by the GNWT, Canada and Aboriginal Governments in language programs	Increased number of family-centred learning programs offered in all communities on an on-going basis	Accessible, public catalogue of produced Aboriginal language books, recordings	Provision of orientation on Aboriginal languages to all new GNWT staff members within six months of being hired

	An increased number of immersion programs (full and part-time offered to school students	Coordinated access points (e.g. web site(s) / resource centres) for sharing of written materials and information accessible to all language communities	Increased use of Aboriginal languages in the GNWT work place
	Successful early childhood ("language nest") programs		Increased number of GNWT employees able to converse in an Aboriginal language

APPENDIX 2

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE
FOR
SUPPORTING STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The Supporting Strategies and Actions for the *NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan* are intended to support activities throughout the next decade. This being said, it is expected that all of the actions identified will begin over the next three years. Many of these actions will, once they are initiated, continue for the remainder of the plan period.

Implementation is divided into four phases. The timing of actions within the phases overlaps somewhat. This being said, general timing of the phases can be described in the following manner:

Phase I – Immediate activities through 2011

Phase II – 2011 through 2012

Phase III – 2012 and beyond

Phase IV – immediate through 2013

Actual timing of activities will be dependent upon the availability of human, technological and financial resources.

The schedule for actions described in the table below, identifies the action, the implementation phase in which the action will be initiated, the year or years in which the action will take place as well as the lead agency or agencies that will be involved to initiating the action. The key at the top of the chart identifies the acronyms used in the table.

Table A2.1

Supporting Strategies and Actions Implementation Schedule

Key: Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT); Aboriginal Governments (AG); Language Communities (LC); Aurora College (AC); Aboriginal Languages Revitalization Board (ALRB); Aboriginal Language Centre (ALC); Teaching and Learning Centres (TLC)

ACTION	PHASE	YEAR TO BE INITIATED	LEAD
Collaborate and Cooperate in Strengthening Aboriginal Languages			
Establish formal agreements of collaboration, cooperation and accountability	I	2011, with periodic renewals	GNWT / AG
Establish periodic meetings of leadership	I	2011	GNWT/ AG
Arrangements for collaboration of GNWT and Aboriginal Governments regarding TLCs	I	2010/11	GNWT/ AG
Agreements with language organizations in other jurisdictions	I	2011/12	LC / GNWT / ALC
Renewal of Language Community Action Plans	I	2010/11	LC / AG
Identify and circulate information related to preservation of materials (written, audio and video)	I	2011	GNWT
Publish information, at least annually, on NWT language activities	I	2011	GNWT
Establish a clearinghouse to identify, consolidate and circulate language materials	I	2011/12	GNWT/ AG /ALC
Establish a website to serve as an access point for information	I	2011	GNWT

Establish multi-year funding agreements between the GNWT and Aboriginal Governments	I	2011	GNWT
Eliminate delays in funding between the GNWT and Aboriginal Governments	I	2011	GNWT
Review current language community funding allocation methodologies	I	2011/12	GNWT
Annually research and prepare a listing of potential funding sources for language related activities	I	2011	ALC/GNWT
Organize collaborative efforts to profile the importance of Aboriginal language	I	2010/11	GNWT/AG
Increase profile of Aboriginal languages through negotiation and profiling activities	I	2010	GNWT/AG
Prepare, in cooperation with language communities, "tool kits"	I	2010	GNWT/ALC
Conduct periodic language community and territorial forums	I	2011	GNWT
Organize regular meetings of language specialists	I	2010	GNWT/ALC
Support language specialists visitation of projects and language activities	I	2010	GNWT
Provide Aboriginal Language Training			
Establish strategy for family literacy	I	2011	GNWT
Prepare an Aboriginal language Education and Training Strategy	I	2011	GNWT
Employ Elders and other speakers as language mentors	I	2011	GNWT/LC
Establish language requirements for language nest programs	I	2011/12	GNWT
Support early childhood development providers in the organization and delivery of language activities	II	2011/12	GNWT

Sup chil	port preparation of materials for use in early hood programming	II	2011	GNWT/ALC
Mor	itor performance of language nest programs	I	2010 and Ongoing	GNWT/LC
Dev use	elop and implement Aboriginal language curricula for in all NWT schools	II/III	2013	GNWT
Des pro	ign and develop Aboriginal language immersion ramming for schools	II/III	2012/13	GNWT
Rev *Edu* lan acti	iew the *Aboriginal Language and Culture Based cation Directive* with a goal of ensuring that there are uage related studies associated with all cultural vities	II	2010/11	GNWT
Cor stu lan	sider adding the requirement that all high schools dents to enroll in a minimum of six credits of Aboriginal uage training	II/III	2012	GNWT
Ide loc	tify and organize student language studies in tions away from schools	II	2012	GNWT
Inc lan	ease the number of language learning opportunities in l-based situations	I/II	2011	GNWT
Foc usa	us immediate learning activities on conversational ge of Aboriginal languages	II	Immediate and ongoing	GNWT
Inc wor	ease the numbers of Aboriginal language speakers king with students in schools	II	2012	GNWT
Dev use and	elop and implement Aboriginal language curricula for in Aurora College and other Adult Basic Education Literacy Programs	II	2012/13	GNWT/AC
Inc edu	ease opportunities for Aurora College teacher cation students to learn Aboriginal languages	II	2011/12	GNWT/AC
Inc pro	ude within all Aurora College certificate and diploma grams a course on Aboriginal language acquisition	II	2012	GNWT/AC
Est trai	ablish an accredited and ongoing interpreter/translator ning program	I/II	2011	GNWT/AC

Provide professional development opportunities for Aboriginal language learning for teachers	II	2011/12	GNWT
Deliver specialized training for health, social services and justice interpreter/translators	I/II	2010/11	GNWT
Include, as part of the Education Leadership Program (Principal Training) components on Aboriginal language importance, awareness and leadership	II	2011	GNWT
Provide technical and professional training for language specialists	II	Immediate and ongoing	GNWT/AC
Develop Aboriginal language programs for use in the delivery of community-based evening programming	II	2011/12	GNWT/AC/LC
Develop packaged learning programs and materials to support home study	II	2011/12	GNWT/AC/LC
Provide opportunities for GNWT employees to develop first and second language skills	III	2012/13	GNWT
Provide all GNWT employees with language orientation	III	2011/12	GNWT
Profile and celebrate GNWT employees who use Aboriginal languages	I	Immediate and ongoing	GNWT
Enhance Organizational Support for Language Activities			
Place responsibility for GNWT Aboriginal language service management and revitalization activities in separate organization units	II	2011/12	GNWT
Establish a secretariat with responsibility for oversight of GNWT Aboriginal language services	II	2011/12	GNWT
Establish an Aboriginal Languages Centre (ALC)	II	2011/12	GNWT
Eliminate the Official Languages Board	II	2011/12	GNWT
Revise mandate of the Aboriginal Languages Revitalization Board	II	2012	GNWT
Appoint members of the Aboriginal Languages Revitalization Board by based on broader range of recommendations	II	2012	GNWT

Provide single window services, either through GNWT offices or through the use of technologies	III	2011/12	GNWT
Review the current GNWT Aboriginal Languages services guidelines	II	2011/12	GNWT
Establish legislative/policy regime to support revitalization	II	2011/2012	GNWT
Establish legislative/policy regime related to government services	II	2011/2012	GNWT
Review current *Official Languages Act*	II	2011/12	GNWT
As a minimum, focus GNWT service guidelines on programs and services offered to the public in the areas of health, social services, housing and justice	II	2011/12	GNWT
Utilize Technologies to Support Goals			
Increase use of Aboriginal languages on radio	I	2011	GNWT
Implement "single window" telephone services in Aboriginal languages	III	2011/12	GNWT
Support the standardization and finalization of the Unicode Dene Font	I	2011	GNWT/LC/AB
Install Dene Fonts on all GNWT computers and train staff in their use	II	2011/12	GNWT
Set standards for GNWT software in order to support Aboriginal language programs	II	2011	GNWT
Support innovation in utilization of technologies	III	2011/12	GNWT
Through the Aboriginal Languages Centre, continue researching the application of technology	III	2012 and ongoing	ALC

Language Planning and Measuring Success			
Plans and strategies for language activities will be finalized	I	2011/2012	GNWT/AB/LC
Plans and strategies will include measurable results and describe how the results will be measured	I	Immediate and ongoing	All
Publicize plans and activities	IV	2011	All
Develop standard framework to record results management and accountability (RMAF) information	I	2011	All
Regularly review the results of activities and plans and make the results public	IV	Immediate and ongoing	All
Report the results of all reviews to Aboriginal Languages Revitalization Board	II	Immediate and ongoing	GNWT/ALC
Change and/or eliminate activities that are not showing results	I	Immediate and ongoing	GNWT/AC/ALC

APPENDIX 3

DRAFT RESULTS MEASUREMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

As discussed in the body of the Plan, the establishment of a results measurement and accountability framework (RMAF), to be used by all parties is important to simplifying and bringing consistency to reporting and accountability. All parties will need to work together to develop a suitable RMAF. The framework below is an example of one that could be used to support monitoring and accountability of language activities.

SUPPORTING STRATEGY: **ACTION:** **Initiation Date:**						
Inputs	**Activities**	**Outputs**	**Output Indicators and Data Sources (DS) and Responsibility (R)**	**Intermediate Outcomes**	**Intermediate Outcome Indicators and Data Sources (DS) and Responsibility (R)**	**Final Outcomes**
	1.		DS: R:		DS: R:	
	2.		DS: R:		DS: R:	

APPENDIX 4

PROJECT PARTICIPATION

The development of this Plan involved a large number of individuals and organizations. The NWT Aboriginal Languages Symposium, group discussions, individual meetings and telephone conversations were all used to collect many of the views and perspectives represented in this document.

A summary of these activities can be found below.

NWT Aboriginal Languages Symposium

The NWT Aboriginal Languages Symposium was conducted in Yellowknife March 30 through April 1, 2010. Over 250 northerners participated in the discussions. The discussions were focused on the Symposium Working Group theme of "a shared responsibility". During the Symposium, members of each of the NWT's Aboriginal language communities developed draft visions, goals and actions to guide future language activities. Information collected during the Symposium from each of the language communities can be found in this Plan. It is also important to note that the results of the Symposium were used throughout the development of this Plan to guide discussions.

Meetings with Language Community Members

During May and June, 2010 a team of staff members from the Department of Education, Culture and Employment travelled to each of the language communities to meet with language specialists, leaders and other individuals with an interest in languages. Members of the team travelled to Fort McPherson, Inuvik, Tulita, Deline, Behchoko, Fort Smith, Hay River, Hay River Reserve and Fort Resolution in this phase of the project.

Meetings with Government of the NWT

A number of meetings were held with GNWT staff members who are involved with or responsible for some aspect of Aboriginal language services or protection, revitalization and modernization efforts. Meetings were held with Deputy Ministers and GNWT Agency CEOs, languages coordinators and program specialists. In addition, some contacts were made with GNWT employees in schools and offices during the meetings with language community members.

Meetings with Language Specialists and Non-Government Organizations

Throughout the project meetings and conversations occurred with individuals and employees of non-government organizations who are involved in language related activities. These discussions were wide ranging and covered topics such as language standardization, community and family learning projects, early childhood, school and college programming.

In total, well over 300 people were involved in contributing to this Plan's development.

APPENDIX 5

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